Classical Philology

ΤΥΧΗ ΠΡΟΛΟΓΙΖΟΥΣΑ, AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE SPEAKER OF THE PROLOGUE

By Clifford Herschel Moore

The mutilated prologue in the comic fragments published in *PSI*, 126, ends thus:

λοιπὸν τοὔνομα
[το]ὑμὸν φράσαι, τίς εἰμι· πάντων κυρία
τούτων βραβεῦσαι καὶ διοικῆσαι, Τύχη.

This adds another divinity to the list of θεοὶ προλογίζοντες. As a parallel to Τύχη we naturally think, with the editor Vitelli, of Ἄγνοια in the *Periceiromene*. Other names will at once occur to every student of ancient comedy: Ἀήρ in an unknown play by Philemon (ἀδ. 91), Menander's Ἔλεγχος (ἀδ. 545), Πάν(?) (Δύσκολος 127), Ἥρως (Ἥρως, dram. pers.), and possibly two δαίμονες in the Φάσμα (Kaibel, *Men.*², p. lvi); likewise Ἡμέρα καὶ Νύξ (*adesp.* 819), Φόβος (*adesp.* 154), Διόνυσος(?) in the Strassburg fragment published by Kaibel (*Gött. Nach.*, 1899, pp. 549 ff.), Ἔρως and Ἀφροδίτη in a papyrus from Ghoran (*BCH*, XXX, 141), not to mention Plautus' Arcturus, Auxilium, Fides, Lar familiaris, Luxuria, Inopia, and Mercurius, or Afranius' Priapus (*Inc. fab.* ii), Remeligo (*Prod.* iii), and Sapientia (*Sella* i). That this custom of introducing a superhuman character to make the initial or explanatory speech of a comedy was not confined to the later period is proved by Aristophanes' use of Καλλιγένεια in his second *Thesmophoriazusae* (335) and by Philyllius' Δόρπια (8).

It is true that in these two cases from the Old Comedy we have per-
sonifications of days; but this offers no difficulty, and indeed the
scholiast on *Thesmophoriazusae* 298 says that Aristophanes repre-
sented Καλλιγένεια as a δαίμων, attendant on Demeter. Besides
this we have of course the evidence given by tragedy, the sister of
comedy, for the participation of divinities in the drama; and even
if all such evidence were lacking, considering the origin of the drama,
we should expect gods to appear.

It will be observed that Τύχη appends her name as a mere tag
to the expository prologue (λοιπὸν τοὔνομα | [το]ὑμὸν φράσαι τίς εἰμι)
without bringing herself into any real relation to the comedy, even
to the extent done by Ἄγνοια (*Peric.* 20 ff.):

<div align="center">

μή ποτε
δι' ἐμέ τι τὴν Ἄγνοιαν αὐτοῖς συμπέσῃ
ἀκούσιον, κτλ.

</div>

Although it is only a small matter of dramatic technique which
is involved, it may be worth while to trace the descent, so to speak,
from the forms by which in the earlier period of the drama the initial
speaker was identified, down to this flat statement by Τύχη. We
are especially interested in the θεὸς προλογίζων, but it is obviously
impossible to separate the divine from the mortal speakers.

The *Supplices* and *Persae* of Aeschylus each begins with a chorus,
whose identity and relation to the drama are made clear in the
opening songs.   In the former play this is done by what we may call
narration; in the second the identification is given by the opening
words:

<div align="center">

Τάδε μὲν Περσῶν τῶν οἰχομένων
Ἑλλάδ' ἐς αἶαν πιστὰ καλεῖται, κτλ.

</div>

In the *Prometheus*, dialogue reveals the initial characters, none of
which, however, is important throughout the play.   But in each of
the four remaining tragedies the first speaker appears alone and
discloses his identity, not in direct statement, but incidentally while
filling our minds with weightier matters.   Thus the φύλαξ in the
Agamemnon centers our attention on the expected signal of Troy's
fall and on his lord's return to his polluted home, but while so doing
makes known his own position; in the *Eumenides* the opening words

of the προφῆτις suggest her identity; this is made quite clear after her narrative by vs. 29:

> Πλειστοῦ τε πηγὰς καὶ Ποσειδῶνος κράτος
> καλοῦσα καὶ τέλειον ὕψιστον Δία,
> 29: ἔπειτα μάντις ἐς θρόνους καθιζάνω.

So at the beginning of the *Septem* and the *Choephoroe* we incidentally discover the identity of Eteocles and Orestes while absorbed in greater concerns.   This same artistic method of making the initial speaker known to the audience was employed by Aeschylus when a god made the first entrance, as we know from fragment 44,[1] where Aphrodite speaks:

> ἐρᾷ μὲν ἁγνός οὐρανὸς τρῶσαι χθόνα,
> ἔρως δὲ γαῖαν λαμβάνει γάμου τυχεῖν·
> ὄμβρος δ' ἀπ' εὐνατῆρος οὐρανοῦ πεσὼν
> ἔδευσε γαῖαν· ἡ δὲ τίκτεται βροτοῖς
> μήλων τε βοσκὰς καὶ βίον Δημήτριον
> δένδρων ὀπώρα δ' ἐκ νοτίζοντος γάνους
> τέλειός ἐστι· τῶνδ' ἐγὼ παραίτιος.

With the exception of the *Trachiniae* all the extant tragedies of Sophocles open with dialogue, which the poet employed in a natural way to disclose the identity of the speakers; furthermore, in the opening speeches of the *O.T.* and *O.C.*, Oedipus names himself at vss. 8 and 3 respectively.   Deianeira begins the *Trachiniae* with a monologue, in the Euripidean fashion, early in which (6–8) she shows her identity clearly.   But in each of the seven tragedies the identification is made doubly certain by the first words of the second speaker:[2]

> Ajax   14 ΟΔ: ὦ φθέγμ' Ἀθάνας.
> Ant.   11 ΙΣ: ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐδεὶς μῦθος, Ἀντιγόνη, φίλων.
> O.T.   14 ΙΕ: ἀλλ' ὦ κρατύνων Οἰδίπους χώρας ἐμῆς.
> O.C.   14 ΑΝ: πάτερ ταλαίπωρ' Οἰδίπους.
> Trach. 49 ΘΕ: δέσποινα Δηάνειρα.
> Phil.   26 ΝΕ: ἄναξ Ὀδυσσεῦ.
> Elec.   23 ΟΡ: ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν προσπόλων.

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[1] The content and manner of these verses is such that I have not hesitated to regard the fragment as belonging to the prologue of the *Danaïdes*, although Athenaeus, to whom we owe the quotation, does not expressly state that Aphrodite appeared as ἡ προλογίζουσα.

[2] This method not unnaturally was employed by Aeschylus in the *Septem* where the messenger begins his address at vs. 39: Ἐτεόκλεες, φέριστε Καδμείων ἄναξ.

Furthermore, save in the *Trachiniae*, where the identity of Deianeira's servant is of no importance, the first words of the initial speaker are a direct address to the second:

Ajax ΑΘ: Ἀεὶ μὲν, ὦ παῖ Λαρτίου.

Elec. ΠΑΙ: Ὦ τοῦ στρατηγήσαντος ἐν Τροίᾳ ποτὲ
Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖ.

O.C. ΟΙΔ: Τέκνον τυφλοῦ γέροντος Ἀντιγόνη.

Ant. ΑΝΤ: Ὦ κοινὸν αὐτάδελφον Ἰσμήνης κάρα.

In the *O.T.* the whole company of suppliants is first addressed,

Ὦ τέκνα Κάδμου τοῦ πάλαι νέα τροφή,

and then at vs. 9 the aged priest is bidden to speak for all:

ἀλλ' ὦ γεραιέ, φράζ', ἐπεὶ πρέπων ἔφυς
πρὸ τῶνδε φώνειν, κτλ.

At the opening of the *Philoctetes*, Odysseus first announces the locality, in something like the Euripidean manner, and then addresses Neoptolemus:

Ἀκτὴ μὲν ἥδε τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς
Λήμνου, βροτοῖς ἄστιπτος οὐδ' οἰκουμένη,
ἔνθ', ὦ κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἑλλήνων τραφεὶς
Ἀχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε, κτλ.

The opening of the satyric play *Indagatores* is a monologue not unlike that of the *Trachiniae*. But it is probable that consonant with the use of the first person in this speech and with the practice of the dramatists, we should supply Apollo's name in the lacuna in vs. 3; and the closing verses of the prologue also show who the speaker is:

36:    πᾶσιν ἀγγελ[λω τάδε,
[τὸν φ]ῶρα τῶν Παιῶνος ὅστις ἂ[ν λάβῃ,
[τῷδ' α]ὐτόχρημα μισθὸς ἔσθ' ὁ κε[ίμενος.

This identification is here, as in the extant tragedies, at once confirmed by the speech of Silenus, even if the probable restoration of the first lacuna should prove wrong:

39:    [ὦ Φοῖβε,] σοῦ φωνήμαθ' ὡς ἐπέκλυον
[βοῶ]ντος ὀρθίοισι σὺν κηρύγμασι,
σπουδῇ τάδ' ἢ πάρεστι πρεσβύτῃ [μαθών,
σοί, Φοῖβ' Ἀπολλον, κτλ.

It was of course Euripides who severed somewhat the initial speech from the rest of the play and frankly used it for the instruction of his audience.[1]   At the same time he adopted in most of his extant plays a less subtle method of identifying his πρόσωπα προλογίζοντα than his predecessors had done, for in twelve of the extant tragedies the speakers of the prologues make themselves known to the audience by name or by description or by both within the first eight verses, as von Arnim (op. cit., pp. 82 f.) pointed out.   As illustrations the following will be sufficient:

Alc.   ΑΠ: ᾿Ω δώματ' ᾿Αδμήτει', ἐν οἷς ἔτλην ἐγὼ
θῆσσαν τράπεζαν αἰνέσαι θεός περ ὤν.
Ζεὺς γὰρ κατακτὰς παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν αἴτιος
᾿Ασκληπιόν, στέρνοισιν ἐμβαλὼν φλόγα.

Hipp.   ΑΦ: Πολλὴ μὲν ἐν βροτοῖσι κοὐκ ἀνώνυμος
θεὰ κέκλημαι Κύπρις οὐράνου τ' ἔσω.

Bacch.   ΔΙ: ῞Ηκω Διὸς παῖς τήνδε Θηβαίαν χθόνα
Διόνυσος, ὃν τίκτει ποθ' ἡ Κάδμου κόρη
Σεμέλη λοχευθεῖσ' ἀστραπηφόρῳ πυρί.

The complete list is Alcestis, Andromache, Bacchae, Hecuba, Heracles, Heracleidae, Hippolytus, Ion, Iphigenia Taur., Medea, Supplices, and Troades, to which we must add the Oeneus and Telephus, as fragg. 558 and 696 show.   The form is always that of a monologue, which might easily have become a direct address to the spectators, but in tragedy the dramatic illusion is maintained, whereas the free character of comedy allowed from first to last a ready disregard of the barrier between actor and audience.   It should be observed, however, that although Euripides makes his initial speaker identify himself thus promptly in twelve plays, he does not fail to connect him with the larger elements of the tragedy; but the connection is not

[1] It is hardly necessary to say that I am not discussing the general characteristics of the prologue, or the influence of Euripides on the New Comedy, including the Roman adaptations.   Those matters have been frequently treated, especially by Dziatzko, Ueber die plautinischen Prologe, Lucern, 1867; von Arnim, De prologorum Euripideorum arte et interpolatione, Greifswald, 1882;   Trautwein, De prologorum Plautinorum indole atque natura, Berlin, 1890; Frantz, De comoediae Atticae prologis, Strassburg, 1891; and by Leo, Plautinische Forschungen², pp. 188–247, to all of which I acknowledge my indebtedness once for all.   I wish to confine myself to the single question of the means and the manner in which the identity of the speaker of the prologue is made clear.

so intimate as in Aeschylus and Sophocles and the name of the speaker
is often given more bluntly at the very beginning of the prologue.
Such is not the case in the *Electra, Helena, Orestes,* and *Phoenissae.*
Here the identification is delayed and, as in the *Choephoroe* and
Septem of Aeschylus, is managed with skill, not carelessly, as von
Arnim (*op. cit.,* p. 82) would have it. In the *Electra* the peasant
to whom Electra has been given as wife, at his entrance greets Argos,
recalls King Agamemnon's departure for Troy and his return there-
from, with rich spoils, to his death; he narrates how Orestes was
spirited away while Electra was left to grow to womanhood, and then
how the murderous purpose of Aegisthus was stayed by the queen's
appeals. Thus he comes naturally in telling of Electra's marriage
to a description of himself in vss. 34 ff.:

> ἡμῖν δὲ δὴ δίδωσιν Ἠλέκτραν ἔχειν
> δάμαρτα, πατέρων μὲν Μυκηναίων ἄπο
> γεγῶσιν· οὐ δὴ τοῦτό γ' ἐξελέγχομαι·
> λαμπροὶ γὰρ ἐς γένος γε, χρημάτων γε μὴν
> πένητες, ἔνθεν ηὐγένει' ἀπόλλυται.

The same method is employed in the *Helena,* where in her geneal-
ogy Helen reaches her own parentage at vss. 17 ff.:

> ἔστιν δὲ δὴ
> λόγος τις ὡς Ζεὺς μητέρ' ἔπτατ' εἰς ἐμὴν
> Λήδαν κύκνου μορφώματ' ὄρνιθος λαβών,
> ὃς δόλιον εὐνὴν ἐξέπραξ' ὑπ' αἰετοῦ
> δίωγμα φεύγων, εἰ σαφὴς οὗτος λόγος.
> Ἑλένη δ' ἐκλήθην.

So in the *Phoenissae* the story of the generations from Cadmus
brings Jocasta to name herself at vss. 10 ff.:

> ἐγὼ δὲ παῖς μὲν κλῄζομαι Μενοικέως,
> Κρέων τ' ἀδελφὸς μητρὸς ἐκ μιᾶς ἔφυ·
> καλοῦσι δ' Ἰοκάστην με.

The same device is employed in the *Orestes,* where at vss. 22 f. Electra
speaks of Clytemnestra's three daughters:

> ᾧ παρθένοι μὲν τρεῖς ἔφυμεν ἐκ μιᾶς
> Χρυσόθεμις Ἰφιγένειά τ' Ἠλέκτρα τ' ἐγώ.

The *Iphigenia Aul.* alone begins with a dialogue:

ΑΓ: Ὦ πρέσβυ, δόμων τῶνδε πάροιθεν
στεῖχε.
ΠΡ: στείχω, τί δὲ καινουργεῖς,
Ἀγάμεμνον ἄναξ.

In the narrative prologue to the *Cyclops*, Silenus addressing Bromios makes his identity plain without naming or describing himself. There remains the doubtful *Rhesus*. This, unlike any other Euripidean play, begins with a brief anapaestic chant by the chorus, which is continued in the dialogue with Hector. The identity of both the chorus and Hector are stated within the first fifteen verses (10, Ἕκτορ . . . . ; 15, φύλακες στρατιᾶς). The longer hypothesis has preserved at least a part of another prologue, addressed by Hera to Athena:

ὦ τοῦ μεγίστου Ζηνὸς ἄλκιμον τέκος
Παλλάς, τί δρῶμεν; οὐκ ἐχρῆν ἡμᾶς ἔτι
μέλλειν Ἀχαιῶν ὠφελεῖν στρατεύματα.
νῦν γὰρ κακῶς πράσσουσιν ἐν μάχῃ δορός
λόγχῃ βιαίως Ἕκτορος στροβούμενοι.
ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστιν ἄλγιον βάρος
ἐξ οὗ γ᾽ ἔκρινε Κύπριν Ἀλέξανδρος θεὰν
κάλλει προήκειν τῆς ἐμῆς εὐμορφίας
καὶ σῆς, Ἀθάνα, φιλτάτης ἐμοὶ θεῶν,
εἰ μὴ κατασκαφεῖσαν ὄψομαι πόλιν
Πριάμου, βίᾳ πρόρριζον ἐκτετριμμένην.

This the grammarian characterizes as πεζὸς πάνυ καὶ οὐ πρέπων Εὐριπίδῃ. On the contrary, it is exactly in the Euripidean style so far as the narrative and the manner in which the speaker identifies herself are concerned.

Such, then, was the technique of the three great tragedians. Now in tragedy the themes were comparatively few and in their main outlines were familiar to all hearers. Whether, therefore, the play began with choral song, monologue, or dialogue, it was ordinarily a matter of some moment that the identity of the initial speaker[1] should promptly be made clear, for the person was part of the

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[1] When the speaker of the prologue was an unimportant person, as for example the nurse in the *Medea*, the name was of no significance and the most incidental expression (*Med.* 6 f.: δέσποιν᾽ ἐμὴ | Μήδεια) was sufficient to explain his relationship to the other characters.

exposition. In comedy the case was different, for the themes were confined in no such familiar bounds as were the subjects of tragedy. From the Old Comedy to the New, therefore, the identity of the initial speaker was *in itself* of little or no importance; his relation to the theme of the play was the significant thing. This appears clearly in the extant comedies of Aristophanes, in which the initial speaker never names himself, but in varying degrees contributes to the necessary exposition. The person becomes of importance only when he is to play a significant part in the comedy.

Who first completely separated the prologue from the play we cannot say. Whether it was done by the Romans, as Dziatzko held (*op. cit.*, p. 12), or more probably by the Greeks (cf. Leo, *P.F.*[2], pp. 235 ff.) does not much concern us at the present moment. It is obvious, however, that when the separation had been accomplished, the speaker was also divorced from the play, needed no longer to be regarded as a character therein, and became the spokesman for the poet.[1] Thus the Πρόλογος, the impersonal speaker, arose. He opens the *Asin.*, *Capt.*, *Men.*, *Persa*(?), *Poen.*, *Pseud.* (?), *Truc.*, and *Vid.*(?) of Plautus and all the plays of Terence. In the *M.G.* Palaestrio speaks the deferred prologue as πρόλογος, not as a character in the play (cf. Leo, *P.F.*[2], pp. 213 f.). The prologue to the *Mercator* occupies in a sense a midway position: its opening lines announce its expository character,

> duas res simul nunc agere decretumst mihi;
> et argumentum et meos amores eloquar.

If the third person instead of the first had been used, the whole prologue might have been spoken by a πρόλογος and could have been severed from the play, which indeed might have been done with some earlier prologues. The connection between the prologue of the *Mercator* and the body of the comedy is purely formal and external, being made by the cue for the entrance of Acanthio, with whose arrival the action begins,

109 f.:   sed quid currentem servom a portu conspicor,
                 quem navi abire votui? timeo quid siet.[2]

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[1] The extreme is found in the prologues of Terence, especially in the prologue to the *Heauton*, and the second prologue to the *Hecyra*.

[2] Cf. *Aul.* 37–39; *Rud.* 79–81; Leo, *P.F.*[2], pp. 215 f.

There remain, however, prologues to six plays—*Amph.*, *Aul.*, *Cas.*, *Cist.*, *Rud.*, and *Trin.*—which are spoken by mythological or allegorical characters. Save in the *Amphitruo*, where Mercury speaks the prologue, none of the speakers of the prologues appears in the play; yet each identifies himself by name, or by name and description, in prompt fashion:

Aul. 1 ff.:   Ne quis miretur qui sim, paucis eloquar.
Ego Lar sum familiaris ex hac familia
unde exeuntem me aspexistis.

Cas. 1 f.:   Salvere iubeo spectatores optumos
Fidem qui facitis maxumi—et vos Fides.

Cist. 149 ff.:   Utrumque haec et multiloqua et multibiba, est anus.
satin vix reliquit deo quod loqueretur loci,
ita properavit de puellae proloqui
suppositione.   quod si tacuisset, tamen
ego eram dicturus, deus, qui poteram planius.
nam mihi Auxilio est nomen.

Rud. 1 ff.:   Qui gentis omnis mariaque et terras movet,
eius sum civis civitate caelitum.
ita sum ut videtis splendens stella candida,
signum quod semper tempore exoritur suo
hic atque in caelo: nomen Arcturo est mihi.

Trin. 1 ff.: LV.   Sequere hac me, gnata, ut munus fungaris tuom.
IN.   sequor, sed finem fore quem dicam nescio.
LV.   adest. em illae sunt aedes, i intro nunciam.
nunc, nequis erret vostrum, paucis in viam
deducam, si quidem operam dare promittitis.
nunc igitur primum quae ego sim et quae illaec siet
huc quae abiit intro dicam, si animum advortitis.
primum mihi Plautus nomen Luxuriae indidit;
tum hanc mihi gnatam esse voluit Inopiam.

In these five comedies, then, the first concern of the author is to tell who the speaker is. The prime purpose is the same in the prologue to the *Amphitruo*, where the speaker, Mercury, is an important character in the play. He first describes his functions in a comic warning which occupies sixteen verses:

Amph. 1 ff.:   Ut vos in vostris voltis mercimoniis
emundis vendundisque me laetum lucris
adficere atque adiuvare in rebus omnibus,
   .   .   .   .

15 f.:   ita huic facietis fabulae silentium
                itaque aequi et iusti hic eritis omnes arbitri.

Then he gives his name in stock fashion:

17 ff.:   Nunc quoius iussu venio et quam ob rem venerim
                 dicam simulque ipse eloquar nomen meum.
                 Iovis iussu venio: nomen Mercuriost mihi.

The evidence then seems to show that although the identity
of the speaker ceased to be of importance after the prologue was
formally severed from the body of the play, writers still found a
dramatic advantage in employing θεοὶ προλογίζοντες, for by this
device they could arouse the interest and secure the attention of
their audience. Not only must the divinity be named—the case
of Mercury in the *Amphitruo* shows that—but he must be named
early, as is done in the six Plautine prologues just noted. The
importance of this had been understood by Euripides, as the follow-
ing quotations show:

> *Hipp.* 1 f.:   Πολλὴ μὲν ἐν βροτοῖσι κοὐκ ἀνώνυμος
>   θεὰ κέκλημαι Κύπρις· οὐρανοῦ τ᾽ ἔσω.
>
> *Troad.* 1 f.:   Ἥκω λιπὼν Αἴγαιον ἁλμυρὸν βάθος
>   πόντου Ποσειδῶν, κτλ.
>
> *Bacch.* 1 f.:   Ἥκω Διὸς παῖς τήνδε Θηβαίαν χθόνα
>   Διόνυσος, κτλ.

The dramatic advantage is largely lost if the identification is long
deferred, as apparently is the case in the prologue to the *Periceiro-
mene* (20 ff.):

> μή ποτε
> δι᾽ ἐμέ τι τὴν Ἄγνοιαν αὐτοῖς συμπέσῃ
> ἀκούσιον,

and it quite disappears if the identification is added as a tag, as in
the fragment published in *PSI*, 126, with which we began,

> λοιπὸν τοὔνομα
> [το]ὑμὸν φράσαι, κτλ.

This seems to be the last stage of the θεὸς προλογίζων: the form is
kept, but the reason for the existence of the god is gone.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY